Walter Williams

MUSIC IN WORSHIP

Report of the Archbishops' Committee

Appointed MAY, 1922

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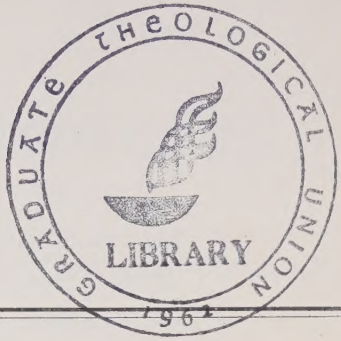

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MUSIC IN WORSHIP.

REPORT OF A COMMITTEE APPOINTED BY THE ARCHBISHOPS OF CANTERBURY AND YORK.

The task which your Graces entrusted to this Committee in May, 1922, was as follows :—

> "To consider and report upon the place of Music in the Worship of the Church, and in particular the Training of Church Musicians, and the Education of the Clergy in the Knowledge of Music as a branch of Liturgical Study."

Accordingly we beg leave to report that we have held in the course of the year nine full meetings of the Committee, in addition to making use of sub-committees, and of a good deal of correspondence ; and that we have unanimously agreed to bring the following considerations, together with some definite recommendations, to the notice of your Graces, in the hope that if our line of thought and argument commends itself, the practical proposals may be endorsed by authority, and reforms may be attempted which we believe would be for the welfare of the Church and the improvement of its standard of worship.

Our Report falls into twelve sections ; and though the method of arrangement adopted involves a certain amount of overlapping, it is perhaps desirable that some of the important points should come up more than once in different connections.

The following is the list of titles of the various sections :—

(1) The Place of Music in the Worship of the Church.

(2) The distinction between what is Fitting and what is Unsuitable in Church Music.

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Sept. 27, 1931

(3) The Choice and Regulation of Music in relation to Smaller Town and Village Churches with slight musical resources.

(4) The Choice and Regulation of Music in relation to Larger Town Churches.

(5) The Choice and Regulation of Music in relation to Cathedral and Collegiate Churches.

(6) The Singing of Hymns.

(7) The Musical Training of Clergy in Theological Colleges.

(8) The Training of Choirmasters and Organists.

(9) The Relations of the Choirmaster and Organist to the Ecclesiastical Authorities.

(10) The Use and Abuse of the Organ.

(11) Suggestions for Diocesan Organisation.

(12) Suggestions for Central Organisation.

(1) The Place of Music in the Worship of the Church.

We would begin by recalling the fact that there is no absolute necessity for the use of any music in the services of the Church. If it is used, it must be with the intention, before all things, of expressing with beauty and dignity man's worship of Almighty God. That music is capable of this function has been the almost universal conviction of Christians from the earliest times. But to this end it must be chosen with care, and no pains must be spared to perform it as well as possible.

The Committee wishes, at the outset, to express its sense of the extent to which, in many places, these principles are recognised, and to welcome the great improvements in church music which have already been effected by devoted efforts in many quarters. Unfortunately, in other places, other considerations have often prevailed. A low standard, both in the choice of the music and in its performance, has been habitually accepted even by those who would not be satisfied with such a standard elsewhere than in church. In many cases the reason of this is that more has been thought of the capacity of the music to attract the hearers than of its fitness to be the vehicle of devotion. Or again, the music chosen is wanting in dignity, and the choice is excused by the plea that the singers are unwilling to perform

anything else. There is prevalent also the false idea that elaborate music is, in itself, superior to simple. All these views we hold to be untrue to the foundation principle from which we start.

After thus recalling and reasserting the Godward aspect of all musical worship, we now go on to summarise the manward aspects of the matter, which will be further considered in our Report.

First, it seems clear to the Committee that the ideal in all parish churches is congregational singing, and that every congregation is well within its rights if it claims to join in all the sung portions of the Prayer Book Services, except the priest's part and those portions of the occasional services assigned by the rubrics to the priest and clerks. To deny this right is to throw away one of the chief advantages of a vernacular liturgy. Wherever music is used as part of the congregational service, it must be used because of its fitness as a vehicle of the spirit of worship. Where speech is more fitting, the use of music is clearly wrong, and where music is fitting, but is ill-prepared, or too hard to render properly, it is right to fall back either upon simpler music which can be rendered well, or upon speech itself.

The choir have a twofold function: in the congregational music they lead the singing, while their own exclusive part lies in the anthems and other supplementary music. Where the congregation does not desire to reserve such a right to itself, the choir will naturally have a wider function. But whatever be the proportion to be observed between them, the Committee is of opinion that this twofold function of the choir should be frankly recognised, and the music planned accordingly.

The proper recognition of the musical part belonging to the congregation implies a greater realisation of the possibilities of unison music than prevails at present.

The choirmaster, or director, who plans the music will be responsible for maintaining fairly the concordat reached between congregation and choir; and on his taste and capacity depends the standard set in each place, the quality of music chosen, and the adequacy of its performance.

The use and province of the organ will depend upon the decisions reached in regard to the above-mentioned points, and the extent to which it is employed in support of the voices will be determined accordingly. For in any case the function of the organ is to be an adornment and not a necessity. When it becomes a necessity it is in danger of ceasing to be an adornment.

The priest's part in singing the service is of primary importance, just as his influence in the whole matter is a great power

for evil or for good. The Committee ventures to offer, in Section (7), some suggestions for the raising of the level wherever this is needed, and in particular for the securing to the clergy of the future a better opportunity of equipping themselves to meet the great responsibilities and opportunities with regard to church music which await them.

There is, indeed, much encouragement to be derived from the widely spread dissatisfaction with the present state of things, and the earnest desire of many clergymen and church musicians to raise the standard of public taste. Also the wiser musical instruction now beginning to prevail in schools encourages us to hope for a steady improvement in public taste, which improvement can only react favourably upon the standard of church music.

But it must be remembered that the place of music in the worship of the Church cannot be considered in isolation, or apart from other elements composing the services. Its purpose we have defined as that of expressing with beauty and dignity worship of Almighty God. It is important, however, to remember that, though instinctive and natural, it is, strictly speaking, not a necessity. On the other hand, while the Church's worship can be offered without music, it cannot be carried out in any corporate form without something in the way of movement and action. In every service there are certain things that are directed to be said and done. Whatever art may be called into alliance with the service as prescribed, it should not be allowed to obscure or hinder its due performance. In this category music does not stand alone among the things which give outward expression to inward devotion. Its own special contribution is the ministry of beautiful sounds. Other arts contribute other things. Architecture contributes an inspiring setting. Painting contributes colour, symbolism, and many means of spiritual suggestion. And from time immemorial man has expressed his sense of things divine no less by symbolic action than by the medium of song. Sight, therefore, has to be considered as well as sound. For a fully expressive worship, that which is seemly and dignified to the eye needs as much to be regarded as that which is beautiful to the ear, and a due proportion must be observed between them. Music and ceremony are alike in that they have to be re-enacted afresh at each service: and therein lie their great possibilities of perfection and also their risks. Over-elaborate music and excessive ceremonial are alike faults, and of the same order: they alike need correction and co-ordination. Good ceremonial will not excuse bad music. The minister in the sanctuary and the musician in the choir are there not as masters,

but as servants, privileged to lead their brethren in the rite which the Church puts into their hands. Dignity, simplicity, restraint, and a close adherence and loyalty to the essential words and actions, form the ideal which must govern all concerned, both things and persons, in the conduct of divine service.

(2) The distinction between what is Fitting and what is Unsuitable in Church Music.

The first thing that is required of all vocal music is that it should be a fitting way of expressing the words that are used, and it is especially in worship that the words matter most. In dealing with music as music the choice between what is suitable and what not is always difficult, and the task is often rendered specially hard because of personal associations. These are so far-reaching and potent that they are apt to crystallise round any music, good or bad. In this way things which prove to be inherently poor, small-minded, and even cheaply sensational (therefore quite unfit for Christian worship), are invested with a dignity which is not fitting. Many worshippers are perhaps vaguely aware that a favourite piece of their own is, after all, not of the best kind to hand down to their children and successors. Made sacred to them by association, it may yet be intrinsically too tawdry for them willingly to pass on to those who have no such associations.

All the more, then, the duty of discernment between that which is musically fitting and that which is unfitting is incontestable. And, impossible though it may seem to lay down any absolute canons of musical taste, or to give any fixed guiding rules of choice, the Committee feels bound to try, in order both to emphasise the duty and to facilitate it.

Four distinct musical tests may be named. First, as to the *rhythm*. Rhythms represent behaviour in the world of sound. Music may move quietly, may leap, or even dance. Clearly its movement or rhythm must be seemly. Church-rhythms should certainly be full of life; but they should as certainly have the needed dignity without heaviness; strength and a pervasive enthusiasm without levity. In short, such rhythms should manifest joyous reticence. A simple example may be taken from a well-known hymn tune, the early rhythmic version of the "Old Hundredth," which seems to possess the right blend of enthusiasm and restraint. It is, by the way, a great pity to "iron out" this rhythm into its modern version of equal minims which loses the joy and gains nothing in dignity. It must be

remembered that the minim in church music should not necessarily be treated as a slow unit.

It may be noticed that nursery rhymes have for their rhythmic characteristic the constant iteration of some little snippet or pattern of longs and shorts. This is named here as being the extreme opposite of that which is needed in church rhythms. They should never degenerate into small-minded rhythmic figures, pirouetting round a point. They should move forward towards their goal, as it were on pilgrimage.

In this connexion it is clear that the proper pace at which music is to be sung should be thought out in every case by all choirmasters. There is a good and right pace for all music, for all sizes of congregations, and for all sizes of buildings; and this right pace can be found by intuition rather than by skill. If too slow, it will induce apathy, even lethargy. If too quick, it will check devotion.

Perhaps most important of all, church-rhythms must rightly fit and serve the words sung. It is amazing to note how seldom the fundamental union of speech-rhythm and tune-rhythms is discerned. This union is seldom loved enough to be actively respected; and there is much church music that ought to be condemned as unsuitable because of its failure in the matter of rhythm.

Secondly, as to the *melody*, or outline, of church music. Here also musical tests depend upon the behaviour of tunes, this time in their actual rise and fall. Steep, disjunct, irresponsible, lavish ups and downs seem unfitting in church melody. Higher value is set in church upon quiet things. Melody can depict both strength and grace, and among the factors to be taken into account these three may be specially noted: (1) advance by steps of a second; (2) euphony in the larger intervals; and (3) *arpeggio* movement through common chords. These three, in a gracious but vital blend, should never fail to produce a fitting church melody. The services, anthems, and the rest, need to be scanned with them in mind, for the very outline of a melody may be traced with the eye, and afford a good test of fitness. If it is either angular or dull, it is probably not desirable. All the parts, not the soprano only, should be so scanned. Dullness is more often the fault of a bass or an alto or a tenor melody. In the perfect anthem or tune all four parts have real interest.

The third musical test suggested here concerns the *harmony* of church music. Of course all chords are good, and none are to be rejected which fit the needs of words in church. But it is, perhaps, not fully recognised that chords, like words, have distinct character, partly inherent, partly acquired by associa-

tion. They have also degrees of attractiveness to the ear, just as colours have to the eye. Music may be gaudily harmonised, even vulgarly so. At the other extreme, the chord of the open fifth, often found in the old music of the Church, has strength, plainness, and blunt perfection; but it is seldom heard in modern music. The common major and minor chords have both strength and grace. Chords of the sixth have, perhaps, more grace than strength. The discords (so called) of the seventh, particularly of the diminished seventh in which no perfect interval dwells, are sometimes sweet, sometimes mildly sensational in their appeal to the ear, and may easily be overdone.

Now as the harmonies of responses, chants and hymns are designed for constant repetition, they must be built of normal chords that bear repetition. Hence any such compositions that are lavish or indulgent in rich or sweet or otherwise assertive chords are not well fitted, at any rate, for these parts of Christian worship. Good melodies may, no doubt, be marked by other characteristics than these; we are only attempting to give general rules, to which there are many exceptions. But these points hold good; and the practical rule of choice here would seem to be: Fear no chord if it fittingly enhances the meaning; but as a general rule seek tunes of perfectly simple diction, that is, of common chords and chords of the sixth, which are both beautiful to the ear and normal to the mind. Highest values should be set upon the simplest harmonies. The common chord has unchanging loveliness and endless new possibilities scarcely yet explored.

The fourth musical test to be applied is that of actual *structure*. In fine church tunes the two, three, four or more phrases, which make up the whole, are always closely knit, logical, balanced and conclusive. The build of a tune is best traced in its outline and its rhythmic balance. Given quiet reflection, it is not really hard to discern, though it is easy to miss it in the act of singing or playing. Merbecke's threefold *Kyrie* is a lovely example of a building which is the exact counterpart and outcome of the words themselves. The tune "S. Flavian" has also a fine build, and indeed all the great tunes of the world have this architectural quality in the highest degree. *Wachet auf* is an outstanding example of perfect construction; and many are the famous tunes which are made to "stand four-square to all the winds that blow" by reason of a strong and finely wrought sequence. If such tunes are studied and tested by choirmasters at leisure, then tawdry tunes of loose build, even though now favoured (for what they recall rather than for what they are) will surely fall into happy neglect.

To these four artistic tests, which are somewhat technical, another may be added of more general application. Music must be tested practically by its effects. It has an unrivalled power of stirring human emotions. For example, it can depict excess in such a way as to suggest what is evil and vicious. There may be a place for such music in the dramatic sphere—*e.g.*, in *Tannhäuser* or *Gerontius*, but not in church worship. Again, some music does not attempt more than to touch the surface of things; and for this music there may also be found a legitimate sphere. But in worship such music must be described as trivial; and it is feared that much popular church music falls into this category. At the worst the effect is to make religion itself seem trivial; but, short of this, and more often, the only effect is to produce a pleasant sensation at the moment, and nothing more. In either case such music does not stand the practical test.

Other music really stirs religious feeling; but even so it must be tested further before it can be finally approved. To stir religious feeling may do good, or it may do harm. Therefore again the same question arises, What is the effect of that? Now the effect will be satisfactory only if the stir reaches beyond the emotions and touches the will, and leads to genuine spiritual effort. Otherwise we are confronted with emotionalism; and emotionalism is a serious danger. In regard to preaching this is generally recognised to be the case; and the sensible listener is on his guard against it in the sermon. But he is, as a rule, not equally so in the music. Yet the two are alike; and both must be subjected to the same practical test. The congregation that goes home fired by either music or sermon to fresh effort has gained something valuable; but the congregation that has merely had one sensation the more, devoid of any definite outcome, goes away weakened in its power to make any good effort, and less capable in the future of effective reaction to genuine religious stimulus.

This danger of emotionalism is greatest at "mission services," and the danger more often lurks in the hymns than in the sermons: for here unworthy, and really deleterious, music has unfortunately an almost unchallenged sway. The effect is, that the real work of conversion is often sacrificed to an attempt at being popular. How many times the net result is some "hearty services" but no lasting outcome! This indeed must be the case if those people, who most of all need protection against the enervating influence of emotionalism, are systematically delivered over to it. The Committee feels obliged to utter a serious warning and protest on this subject.

In judging thus, it is not thereby maintained that the effect of music is the same on all alike. A great deal, as has already been said, depends upon association; for music which is in itself harmful may, for some, be charged with hallowed memories. Much also depends upon personal temperament; much again upon musical education, and upon the force of tradition. Bad music, like pernicious literature, is happily less hurtful to those who are hardened than to those who are young and innocent. But all these considerations have to do with individual persons; and thus they do not affect the main point. For it is the effect on the worshippers as a whole that has mainly to be considered, rather than the effect on this or that person. Those, therefore, who are responsible for the choice of music must chiefly aim at protecting the many from anything that, in its last results, is unsatisfactory. The Committee does not suggest any drastic denunciations and prohibitions in this matter. But it does strongly urge careful thought and discernment on the part of all; and it appeals to all responsible leaders to see that the same standard of sincerity, ardour, and a sound mind be applied to all church music—particularly both to hymns and to their melodies—as is, or should be applied to other church utterances.

While it is always difficult to effect changes affecting the habits and practices of adult congregations, there is a splendid opportunity for bringing up the children to appreciate the advantages of really good and suitable church music. No opportunity should be neglected in this important branch of children's education. The Catechism and the Sunday school are two opportunities which at once suggest themselves.* But experience seems to show that, so far from being used to secure for the children better music and a better standard of taste than the adults have, they are often the opportunity of weaker and worse music. Until there is a change in this respect in church music, analogous to that which is going on in schools of all kinds, not much headway can be made.

The inexorable law of association compels all reforming musicians to move with care and sympathy, but with no easy-going tread, towards the high regions of finer church melody. Many homely virtues—naturalness, buoyancy, quietude, sincerity, zeal, spacious thoughts, and high desires—are the characteristics of good church music, as of good sermons; and the Committee feel it safe to appeal for more constant thought on the part of clergy, choirmasters, and all musical enthusiasts who love

* See *The Winchester Hymn Supplement*, Part III., brought out by the Winchester Diocesan Church Music Committee.

worship, as to their definite habitual responsibility of choice in this important matter.

(3) The Choice and Regulation of Music in relation to Smaller Town and Village Churches with slight Musical Resources.

In practice the exact place that music is to take in worship depends a good deal on the type of church. For this reason it will be convenient to divide churches into three classes, premising that the classification implies no difference of standard as to the excellence of the music itself, but only some difference as to the degree of elaboration and difficulty which it involves. We deal first with the music in the smaller and more simple congregations.

The consideration of this side of the problem is in many ways the most interesting and important part of the Committee's work. Here, probably, it is most difficult to appraise what is being done, or to advise what should be done, owing, it may be, to the divergent training, or lack of training, of the amateur choirmaster and organist, or owing, it may be, to the entire absence of musical knowledge on the part of the incumbent. He is usually anxious to have only what is best; but he does not give sufficient weight to what is musically best. Besides this, he wants to keep his choir happy and contented and critical propensities in the congregation dormant. In a large number of cases his ideals of church music are very restricted. They may have been fostered almost exclusively by publications of the last twenty years of the nineteenth century, which even when written by eminent cathedral dignitaries form but a small part of the great tradition of church music; or else by Diocesan Choral Associations, which too often in the past have encouraged the tendency to copy slavishly and without discrimination the cathedral ideals, instead of counteracting them by setting up high parochial ideals for parish choirs.

Since the beginning of the present century, however, an entirely new situation has arisen owing to a variety of causes :—

(1) The war, which caused an almost entire absence of men; consequently old methods were found to be unsuitable, and new methods had to be found;

(2) The new spirit abroad, which makes people willing to accept and apply all sorts of fresh ideas;

(3) The revival of the catholic ideal of worship, which has made the Holy Communion the central service of Sunday in many parishes;

(4) The lessening of the sense of duty as regards attendance at church on Sundays, and the substitution of personal inclination, with the result that a more critical and more earnest temper pervades the congregations;

(5) The spread of education in church music, which has made people realise that the old favourite four-part chants and our familiar hymn-tunes do not represent the only ideal for the church service.

Gradually but decidedly a strong conviction has arisen that an absolute distinction must be made between the service which is suitable for cathedrals and that which is suitable for this type of parish churches. A village service on simple lines can be splendid and uplifting; it can, in its own way, reach quite as high a level, musically and artistically, as well as devotionally, as in another way is reached by a large town church. This cannot be too often or too firmly emphasised.

It is also in these simpler churches that the plea which we have made for congregational singing is at its strongest. It is the unanimous judgment of the Committee that, with a view to improving all congregational music, the first need of the moment is a fearless revival and vigorous use of natural unison singing. The term "unison" is intended to include the simultaneous singing in octaves (*e.g.*, women or boys singing the melody together with men), while it does not exclude the alternate singing in two different octaves, men and boys (or women) taking turns, and indeed this last is in many ways more musically effective. The choir when it is leading the congregational worship may then sing in unison also.

It will no doubt be objected by some persons that unison singing is dull; but this is not the case. Provided that good music is chosen, and the choir and congregation put their hearts into it, unison singing is satisfying to a degree which can be realised only by experience.

In earlier days, before the introduction of part-singing or instrumental accompaniment, the art of singing in unison, either by a whole body of voices, or by a few select voices, attained to a degree of perfection which has now been lost. It was sacrificed to make way, first, for the new art of harmony and then, at a later stage, for instrumental accompaniment. But much of this lost excellence should be recovered; and it can be, whether musical resources are slender or not, provided that

trouble is spent on it. When it is recovered, some instrumental accompaniment may well be added without spoiling the singing, and may even enhance it, provided always that the player is sympathetic.

It is unfortunate that Plainsong has come to be associated, in the ordinary mind, with one particular phase of churchmanship. From the musical point of view its beauties and artistic value should be more generally explained, so that it may stand or fall upon those rather than upon other grounds. Until this is done its use will continue to be unduly restricted and widely misunderstood.

It is still true that there are delicacies of rhythm, phrasing and interpretation which are fairly easily attainable in unison singing, but very rarely can be reached in part-singing. The performance of hymns and psalms give plenty of scope for such ideals. The delicacy of good rhythmical movement is everywhere needed, even in hymn singing, where the words have a general metrical uniformity. A familiar hymn gives the following varied examples of lines in C.M. rhythm taken almost at random :—

O God, our help in ages past.

Under the shadow of thy throne.

From everlasting thou art God.

Short as the watch that ends the night.

and these do not exhaust all the differences exhibited in one single hymn. Now in good unison singing these can be properly distinguished ; and great gain will ensue both artistically and devotionally. To accomplish this demands, no doubt, considerable practice on the part of the choir and congregation alike. But such practice may become very interesting When the tune is known by heart, all the attention can be given to the words : and if the voices sing unaccompanied at practice they will soon instinctively come to appreciate and to express these rhythmical refinements, and so not merely pronounce but bring out the words. But great care must be taken that the accompaniment does not thwart them.

At other times it is not the rhythm but the meaning of the words that demands this delicacy of execution, *e.g.*, when a phrase overruns the line,

Thou art the Life ; the rending tomb
Proclaims Thy conquering arm ;

If Thou shouldst call me to resign
What most I prize, it ne'er was mine ;

or when a line is broken into several phrases, perhaps, by commas, thus—

Thrice Holy : Father, Spirit, Son ;

or—

Have we no words ? Ah, think again ;

or, more subtly still, when apart from punctuation a certain accent or pause is needed to bring out the sense :—

Lord Jesus, give us grace
On earth—to love Thee more,
In heaven—to see Thy face.

To aim at such niceties as these is a very attractive task ; and by so doing the music in countless passages may become interpretative and really help the worshipper ; and the very practising of such things becomes in itself an act of devotion.

If this is true of hymn-singing it is still more true of the recitations of the psalms either with or without musical note. The prose rhythms are much more varied ; the sound and sense of what is recited is therefore more difficult to follow. Intelligent interpretation is more than ever needed, and corresponding pains must be taken in rehearsing the psalms if the high standard is to be attained. In many churches it would be better if the aim were to say the psalms well rather than to sing them. In either case the art of simultaneous recitation is much the same. In either case there are various ways of securing alternation verse by verse. The most satisfactory is when one side is answered by the other, and the least satisfactory when one voice is answered by all the rest. It cannot be too often repeated that in all musical recitative the words are of more importance than the music, and that whatever chants are used they should be regarded as elastic, and the time-values as modifiable, while the bar-lines should be lost sight of, and the attention riveted on bringing out the sense of the words through giving them their correct and natural rhythms.

The canticles claim attention first ; and, being familiar to all, they are more easily brought to a high level than the psalms. Congregations universally, and unison choirs in churches of this type, should always first make sure that they have acquired the art of chanting by the singing of the familiar canticles ; and also that they have learnt to recite the psalms really well without musical note, before they go on to recite them to music. Even when they are expert in this a good part of their rehearsing may well be done without note.

The Choir.—With such ideals of chanting and hymn-singing realised, a unison choir can in this way easily attain a high level

of chanting which is very rarely attained by choirs who sing their chants in parts. Moreover, the average congregation that wishes to take its proper share in the singing will get much more help from the former than it does from the latter.

Yet, while urging the recovery of the ideals of monody, the Committee desires to urge also the careful cultivation of part-singing, and to encourage it wherever it can be efficiently done. In many, if not all, parts of the country in churches of this type it should be possible to select and train adequately at least a quartet or double quartet of mixed voices. These "chanters" could sing either with the main body of unison singing, forming a vocal accompaniment to it, or else in alternation with it. They could either lead the rest; or, if the rest were strong enough to go their own way, they then could sing descants and settings in the tenor as well as the ordinary settings. Great variety and richness could thus be secured, but all on the basis of unison and congregational singing. To attain this it would often be well worth while to transform a good deal of the inefficient part-singing that now goes on in the crowded chancels of many small churches of this type. To the "chanters" also would naturally fall the task of supplementing the congregational singing by special pieces of their own, additional to the general service.

But two cautions must be emphatically given. First, there should be no part-singing until all the parts can be secured and properly balanced, and until all the notes are correctly sung. In order to attain this a choirmaster will do better to concentrate on the few individuals, men, women, and boys, than on a choir *en masse*. Secondly, it must be noticed that part-singing, as a rule, involves the adoption of a higher pitch than is desirable for unison. For the latter purpose all the usual settings of hymns and chants are too high;* and many chants are wholly unsuitable because of the high reciting-notes.† If the unison singing is to remain the chief concern of the choirmaster, as it should be, the part-singing which accompanies it, or alternates with it, will have to submit to certain limitations, and restrictions, especially as regards the chants that can be used. So far as hymn tunes are concerned, the old tenor-settings,‡ which, indeed, were made for this purpose, will often

* The transposed edition of *Hymns, Ancient and Modern* should be followed where that book is in use; otherwise chants and tunes should be transposed to a lower key.

† But see Nicholson's *Unison Chant Book*. (Faith Press.)

‡ See the *Tenor Tune Book*, and the tenor settings in the *English Hymnal*, and elsewhere.

be more easily combined with a congregational unison than the modern settings which have the melody in the treble.

The responses should be sung, unaccompanied, to the old melody (now often called "Ferial Responses"), the main body singing the melody in unison; while the "chanters" and such as can harmonise correctly and helpfully sing the simple harmonies, provided that the officiant can set and maintain a suitable pitch.

The same use of the art of choral unison will make a simple congregational choral Eucharist a possibility. The people's part —*Kyrie*, Creed, *Sanctus*, *Gloria in excelsis*—should in churches of this type be familiar to all, either in simple unison melody, such as the traditional plainchant, or the setting by Merbecke, or else in very simple modern settings in which unison is maintained throughout or unison alternates with passages in harmony, in such a way that the people's melody is not clouded, but only helped and enriched by any harmonies used as choral accompaniment to it. The chanters may also well make their special contribution to the common worship by singing the *Benedictus* or the *Agnus Dei*, or other additions to the rite, just as they may helpfully contribute short hymns or anthems as aids to devotion during intervals in the service, apart from the co-operation of the congregation. But such aids should be sparing, and offered only when they can conceivably be more helpful than silence would be, and when already some place in the intervals has been jealously retained for silence. Only on rare occasions, if at all, should they sing those portions of the service which fall within the province of the congregation, to music in which the congregation has no share: indeed, in the Committee's judgment, these portions should always be sung to music which does not preclude the congregation from taking its part.

Before passing on, the Committee would take this opportunity of suggesting that the value of silence in church services should be more generally known and considered by church musicians. A good silence is, to speech and to music, as a good frame is to a picture. Too prolonged a silence may easily defeat its end, but there should always be enough silence to direct the mental ear to the music itself. Silence can give heightened value to the meanings of all utterance, especially all musical utterance. Besides this it tends to reverence and to a wholesome fear.

Wherever an aptitude for part-singing is found among members of the congregation, and they can readily learn to sing in harmony, this practice should be encouraged and developed so as to ensure that the singers can sing their parts accurately. Then the various alternations of unison and part-singing should be carefully cultivated.

Practice.—In all churches of this type congregational practices are necessary. They can be made in themselves very attractive to all sorts and kinds of people, especially where members of the congregation are able to sing in parts. Future progress in church music must depend very largely upon developing this enthusiasm and maintaining an ardent course of congregational practices. It is found in some places that a weekly practice may be easily arranged for half an hour before Evensong, and that once a month a study of new music may suitably take the place of the evening sermon. Such opportunities would, in the course of time, enable a congregation to learn thoroughly a considerable range of suitable church music, and might do much also to lift its worship on to a higher level.

The Choirmaster and the Organist.—In some churches these are two distinct offices: in others they are combined. In churches of this type, however, it is rare to find in either capacity one who has had a professional training. The amount of service contributed by amateurs is beyond all calculation and beyond all praise: and in paying this tribute to them the Committee would venture also to point out to them in the appended Bibliography a number of books and papers which will help them in qualifying more fully for their work. It is not suggested that a village choirmaster or organist requires a large amount of technical knowledge; but he does require to be possessed of a certain amount of acquaintance with, and sympathy for, church music. The choirmaster must know something of voice production and other branches of choir training. The organist must not only be able to play the notes correctly, but he must also have a trained sense of rhythm and proportion, and must show that he has learnt the essential difference between using his instrument to accompany the voices, and using it to lead them or pull them through. He cannot do this unless the singers themselves have some confidence and independence; and they can best learn these when the choirmaster is a different person from the accompanist, and preserves the right balance between them and the instrument; or when they have been much practised in unaccompanied singing. Indeed no body of persons ought to begin to call themselves a choir unless they can sing unaccompanied without loss of pitch.

In these circumstances it becomes apparent that the choirmaster, *i.e.*, the person whose duty it is to make choir and congregation sing, is an official of more importance than the organist, and where possible it would be better to keep the offices distinct; the choirmaster to be the essential and respon-

sible official. He, especially as being responsible for the choice of music, must try to extend his knowledge and develop a wise discrimination. But all concerned should strive to absorb the real spirit of church music; should read and do their best to assimilate the many excellent books published in recent years, which may, in many cases, help to a new outlook on the subject.

The Parson.—The ultimate responsibility for the music in all parish churches rests with the incumbent. Another section of this Report (Section 7) deals with the training of the clergy in the subject of church music. In this section the Committee only needs to say that when he cannot sing the officiant's part accurately, it is better that he should not attempt it, and that in that case the singing of responses should be dropped. This need not prevent the singing of the *Sanctus*, though that, properly speaking, is continuous with the versicles and preface. These the celebrant must sing at the pitch corresponding with the *Sanctus*, or not at all. But other versicles and responses can be sung at any pitch which may suit him, inasmuch as they link on to nothing but the reciting note of the prayer following them: and there is no difficulty in the singers taking their pitch from him provided they sing in unison. Similarly the "amens" should not be sung unless the prayer has been said upon a fixed note.

The Organ.—Although it is obviously impossible to lay down a hard-and-fast rule, experience shows that in most small churches the most satisfactory position for the choir and organ is behind the congregation. Support is best given to the congregation in this way. The chancels in most of our small medieval parish churches are too narrow to be convenient for a choir, and too separate to be a place of leadership. The Committee would like to think that, given the proper balance of harmony, the old village orchestra could be reinstated in the west gallery, to accompany the hymns, the remainder of the singing to be unaccompanied. This west-end choir should be regarded as leaders of the congregation, but where there are "chanters" also they may well occupy seats in the chancel.

Hymns.—The subject of hymn-singing is further dealt with in a special section of this Report (Section (6)).

The choice of music, especially for the churches of this type, has often hitherto presented great difficulties. But there is now plenty of good advice available for whoever is responsible in this respect, and references are given in the Bibliography to some existing lists, books and papers which the Committee can recommend.

(4) The Choice and Regulation of Music in relation to Larger Town Churches.

In this section we pass to churches where the musical resources are greater, where it may be assumed that there is already a capable choir, and that the duties of choirmaster and organist are in competent hands.

The principles laid down in the previous section still hold good. The congregation has still its duty to perform, and should be helped and not hindered by the choir in doing it. But it will be assumed that the choir in this section can discharge more difficult tasks than the "chanters" of the last section, and this difference must be taken into account as we consider in turn each of the two sides of that choir's duty, viz. :—

(A) The support and encouragement which it gives to the congregation ;

(B) The addition it makes to the service in the shape of choir music.

(A) As regards the contribution made by the congregation to choral worship. In the churches now under consideration unison singing ought to be steadier and more solid. Therefore more can be attempted in the way of descants and *faux-bourdons*. Also there should be more alternation, or antiphony, between the choir and the congregation. And in both psalms and hymns there should be many verses sung in unison while the organ provides varied harmonies.

Possibly here also there will be more people who are competent to sing in parts. Where this can be done effectively it should not merely be encouraged, but it should be definitely developed. An endeavour should be made to bring about an alliance between the choir and the musical portion of the congregation. Possibly also the interest of the members of a local choral society may be enlisted. It is hardly necessary to say that, in order to bring about these desirable results, fairly frequent congregational practices are essential.

Where the services of a first-rate choir are attainable, and yet the people are keen about fulfilling the share belonging to them, endless results of delightful variety can be produced. In singing the hymns, for instance, the meticulous and disconcerting marks of expression found in some hymn-books need not be observed. But in some verses the organ would thunder out with everyone singing in unison. Then might follow a verse

sung in harmony by the choir alone, with no accompaniment. Another by the congregation only and the organ; another with a *faux-bourdon* added, and so on. Broad effects of this kind, deliberately planned and carried out, add a new zest to our hymn-singing.

In the Holy Eucharist it will probably be felt in many churches that the ancient plainsong proper to the Nicene Creed should always be used for it. Also that it is well to give a like congregational character to the singing of the *Sanctus* and the *Gloria in excelsis* by the employment of Plainsong or of Merbecke's setting (in its unisonal and unbarred form). Elsewhere members of the congregation will become familiar with some modern service and take their share, and even their parts, if they are given an opportunity of learning then. Then other portions of the service, such as the *Benedictus*, the *Agnus Dei*, or something in the way of a Gradual, may fittingly be reserved for the choir. But the responses after the *Sursum corda* and the Lord's Prayer should always be sung in congregational unison to the ancient melody.

At Morning and Evening Prayer the unison responses secure to the congregation their first participation in the music. When harmonized responses are sung, such as the so-called "Festal Responses" of Tallis, the congregation with the bulk of the choir should sustain the melody (found in the so-called "Ferial Responses"), and in particular when it appears in the tenor; the other parts being sung by a few voices. In any case, just as the versicles are sung in free rhythm by the minister, so the responses must be equally freely sung and at a corresponding pace.

It will be a matter for the concordat between the choir and the congregation how far the latter participates in the singing of the psalms; and the arrangements will vary accordingly. So also with the vexed question as to how the canticles should be sung. Some would urge that the congregation ought to be able to join in the rendering of these parts of the office, others would say that the meaning of these great poems is enforced by carefully wrought musical illustration. A practical compromise between these views can be reached by the employment of Gregorian tones, or other unison chants, interspersed with some harmonisation of some verses sung by the unaccompanied choir.

In other cases the special settings of the canticles may be for voices in unison, or for simple parts such as the musical members of the congregation can learn. But in many churches of this type, as in cathedrals, it must be recognised that the congregation will surrender its right to sing the canticles, and

will look to the choir to sing them. Perhaps they will be wise if, by a music committee such as is suggested in Section (9), they retain some voice in the matter, so as to secure that the "services" are worthy, and on ordinary occasions not too long or elaborate.

(B) While responses, psalms, hymns and the people's part of the Holy Eucharist belong in a special way to the congregation, there are other portions of the service which, properly and with devotional gain, can be carried out by the choir alone.

Anthems, if not unduly elaborate and lengthy, can be impressive and edifying. Since these works, as a rule, are musical expositions analogous to the reading of lessons or to preaching, while they are being performed the congregation should be encouraged to remain seated. By printing the words of the anthems in a parish magazine, or by other means, it ought to be made possible for everyone to know exactly what is going on.

The activities of a good choir and, possibly, of some local choral society, may profitably be enlisted in a closely allied direction. Some of the greater anthems, say of Purcell or of S. S. Wesley, a Bach cantata, or other suitable works, might be sung at a special service or after Evensong. Now and then it might even be arranged that such a rendering of impressive music should take the place at Evening Prayer of the sermon, which is customary but not enjoined by any rubric.

In many ways it would be a gain if more of the music appointed for the choir alone were sung without accompaniment. In some large churches, on special occasions, the choir with its conductor could be stationed behind the altar, or in a chapel or at the west end of the building, when some great service of the polyphonic school might be executed. The effect of the delicate and distant sounds thus produced, by contrast with the sonorous tones of the organ and the voices of the congregation in singing the hymns, might be extraordinarily beautiful.

It must, however, be remembered that the very competence and willingness of a good choir may bring with them certain dangers. It is a mistake to overload a service with choral work.

In this connexion it may be well to say here something about the custom which has grown up in some places of employing during the Choral Eucharist big works written for the Latin rite during the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. Such music is used with the laudable desire of offering the best that can be found. But these writings, though bearing the names of distinguished composers, seek, in great measure, to excite emotion by a kind of expression that is essentially mundane. Frequently both their structure and their length make them unsuitable for the

Anglican Service. And, with reason, their use is, at least in theory, forbidden in the Roman Church. More recent masses, of which Gounod's *Messe Solennelle* may stand as an example, frankly exploit the idioms of the opera and the concert-room, besides being also subject to the above-mentioned objections.

The dignity and the mystery of the Eucharist demand a different treatment. The great traditions of the past have set a fine example in the ascetic beauty of plainchant and in the timeless purity and religious art of the polyphonic period. Each age must find its own expression while retaining what is best in the past. But all such music ought to be characterised by a noble simplicity, an eloquent reticence, and a religious awe combined with the expression of deep inner feeling.

The use of music in religious processions has become very popular, without its *rationale* being always understood, or its plans carefully thought out. When a procession takes place, it should be regarded as an action forming a definite part of the service, and as having an objective. Whether it occurs before the Choral Eucharist or before the close of Evensong, those moving round the church should go to a point, such as the font, the roodscreen, an altar, the entrance to the chancel, and so on. There they should make a "station" for prayer, and then return to their customary seats. At the "station" a suitable collect should be said, or other prayers offered. When once this principle is grasped and applied, the whole ceremony becomes full of meaning, and it falls into line with other intercessory processions, such as those of the Rogation days, and with the Litany itself, never more valued than when it is sung in procession escorting the celebrant to the altar. On the occasion of a procession at the end of Evensong it may be found convenient that the usual collection should be made during the hymn sung before the sermon rather than after it. Moreover, the music sung at the procession should illustrate the particular devotion which prompts the procession, rather than describe the mere motion which it involves.*

The voluntaries played before and after the services have an important place, and exercise a strong influence for good or harm. They should be carefully chosen in view of the nature of the service and the season of the Church's year. It is useful that the names of voluntaries to be played should be posted up beforehand.

* A useful article on this subject, by Dr. Dearmer, will be found in the S.P.C.K. *Manual of English Church Music.*

The use of instruments other than the organ in worship is certainly in accord with the traditions of the English Church. Much depends upon the capacity of a building for accommodating a small orchestra and its conductor. Probably any such addition to the usual musical resources of a church should be employed only at festivals, and the effect will be much enhanced if anything like continuous use of the added instruments is avoided. For instance, in a hymn of six verses only about two of them should be accompanied by the orchestra.

In considering the officiant's part we may note the propriety of using the natural or speaking voice in a good many parts of the service. A laudable custom is found, in an increasing number of churches, of thus reading all the parts of Mattins and Evensong which come before "O Lord, open Thou our lips" and after the Third Collect, the corresponding "amens" being said in the same way. And there is much to be urged for so treating the Apostles' Creed and the second Lord's Prayer, while other parts are sung. Also, during the Communion Service, it should not be taken for granted that the priest's part, and indeed that of the people, should be sung continuously. Careful thought should be given as to when recitation without musical note may most appropriately be employed. This would seem to be called for, at least, in the reciting of the Commandments, and from the Invitation to Communion till the end of the Comfortable Words (including the Confession). After the Prayer of Consecration the "amen" should be said or sung in such simple fashion that everyone can join in with his utterance of assent. Here, as also after the Blessing at Mattins or Evensong, a short pause of complete silence has great devotional value. To fill up every interval of a service with organ playing (whether such extemporising is artistically done, or otherwise) seems to suggest the notion that worshippers cannot safely be left for a moment to concentrate their own thoughts of prayer and adoration. If something is needed during the communion of the people, any playing or any singing, whether of a motet by the choir or of a hymn, should be of a subdued character.

(5) The Choice and Regulation of Music in relation to Cathedral and Collegiate Churches.

When we come to consider the music of Cathedral and Collegiate Churches, we naturally call to mind that great collection of English Church Music which we have inherited from the past. Much of it is beyond the scope of ordinary parish churches.

It is too large in scale, too elaborate in structure, too difficult in detail, or else it requires too much subtlety of rhythm and delicacy of finish, to be practicable except where there is not only a very competent choir, but one that is accustomed to sing together daily. But the best of this body of music represents some of the highest ideals both of art and of worship; and expresses in a unique form some of the best of Christian devotion. On all grounds this inheritance must be maintained and developed.

The Committee desires to emphasise the importance of the Choral Foundations associated with the ancient Cathedrals and Collegiate Churches as being the chief means of preserving these great traditions of English church music. It considers the principle of holding two daily choral services, which dates at least from the period of the First English Prayer Book, to be an integral part of the cathedral system: at the same time it recognises that the actual form of such services, as well as the hours at which they are customarily held, may not be such as are best suited to modern needs. The maintenance of choral establishments on an adequate footing it considers to be one of the chief obligations of a cathedral chapter; and as this involves the employment of a sufficient number of competent lay clerks (at least six) and the education of the choristers, it may in many cases necessitate either a redistribution of available funds or fresh financial assistance from outside sources, or the suppression of one or more clerical offices. The last course, however regrettable, would be, in the final resort, far preferable to the abandonment or curtailment of one of the most important and valuable of the activities of these foundations.

The chief reasons that have brought us to this conclusion are the devotional ones; but there are practical ones as well. Numbers of clergy, choirmasters and organists have not had the opportunity to gain a wide knowledge of church music, its history and comparative value; such men rightly feel that their taste is not sufficiently educated to be to them an invariably safe guide. It is upon the cathedral that these people rely for guidance. Having once heard a composition there, or seen it in a cathedral music list, they consider that it should be good enough for them, forgetting that many such works were written for different conditions from their own.

Unfortunately, however, no one can gainsay the fact that a good deal of weak and uninspired music is still heard in the cathedrals. The majority of cathedral choirmasters are willing and anxious to improve the repertory; but in some cases their hands are tied by opposition on the part of the clergy. If the

choirmaster's motives are pure and his ideals high, it is the duty of those who work with him to support and encourage, not to hamper and depress him. No doubt the clergy fear that protests may arise from the congregation if any changes are made : and the worshippers in cathedrals are often especially conservative. But the plan of giving people only what they like can never be a worthy policy in any church, and in the mother church of the diocese it should find no place.

Some other reforms seem desirable besides those already mentioned concerning the hours and form of the services and the elimination of inferior music.

It is desirable that more unaccompanied music should be heard in our cathedrals. The use of the organ in services and anthems where it merely doubles the voice parts throughout is liable to be monotonous and destroy the effect of the part-writing.

We urge that cathedrals should set apart a sum of money every year for keeping their choir libraries in order and up to date. In this connection we wish to bring to the special notice of our cathedral authorities the new collection of Tudor church music which will soon be available for use.

This leads to a further question whether some cathedrals might not add to their representative character some specialisation in different provinces of church music. A choir which, like Ratisbon, devoted itself predominantly to music of the sixteenth century would serve well the purposes of devotion as well as art. Elsewhere another choir might concentrate upon the older *English* music. Another might be frankly modern. In any such scheme there should be included some cathedral choir which specialised in plainsong singing daily at Mattins, Eucharist and Evensong, and including all the more elaborate and solo music. Such a choir might be smaller than the others, and incidentally would be less costly. Certainly in some place all this fine and devotional chant should be restored to use, and this can only be done adequately by a choir that practises and sings together every day. As it is, all the choral foundations make a rather monotonously uniform attempt at doing a little of everything; the field is now too large for this: some specialisation and variety would be a gain.

Some reform of a constitutional kind is suggested below in Section (9).

(6) The Singing of Hymns.

It is of particular importance that hymn-music should be of first-rate quality. It is congregational, and therefore affects the

whole body of worshippers. It is recurrent, and therefore any fault becomes, by sheer repetition, intensified. It will not then be amiss to supplement the three preceding chapters dealing with churches of different types, with some special consideration of this subject, which concerns them all in some degree.

1. Hymns form no prescribed part of the services, but are chosen at will. The first question that arises, then, is this, How can we—we the average parson, choir, congregation, organist—know the difference between good and bad hymn-tunes The general problem already handled in Section (2) comes up again in this special connexion.

It is a question which opens up some fundamental considerations. What principles should govern our choice? First of all, a hymn-tune must be worthy of being offered in worship to Almighty God. This principle, of course, commands universal recognition; but many who are foremost in admitting its force in general are far from foremost in applying it firmly in detail. Perhaps it appears to them to be a shifting, indefinite axiom, rather than a sifting clear-cut judgment. Nevertheless, the concrete application of this principle to a doubtful hymn-tune in such a form as this,—Am I choosing this tune because it is worthy of a place in divine worship, or because people like to sing it?—will often clear the mind.

It then becomes plain that what is involved is not merely a question of *musical* worthiness. More is at stake; and here we may suggest that critics who have been content simply to attack certain composers, schools, and trends of musical thought, have failed to present their case in its fulness, and therefore have not convinced the defenders. Even if (stretching a point) the musical worth of the compositions in question be conceded, what we are really groping after is ultimately a matter of religious psychology. The Christian religion is a sincere and noble religion. Does this or that tune convey a sincere and noble impression? If not, it is giving a false impression, even an actual misrepresentation of the Christian religion.

How vital and serious a thing this is can be illustrated by a quotation from the well-known war-book, *As Tommy sees us*, written by the Presbyterian Army Chaplain, Herbert Gray :—

> "I turn to scrutinise with a new carefulness the hymns we offer. It is a matter of the first importance. It appears to me a disastrous thing to use jingling and cheap tunes for the praise of God. Men will go away humming such tunes, and may, therefore, appear to like them. But they are no help to reverence. They cheapen religion. The best of

> our young men turn in disgust from such tunes. The God whom men will worship with real reverence is an august and almighty God ; and to offer to Him frivolous and tinkling music is a profanity."

And furthermore, in speaking of the soft feeble notions of religion and of the Lord Jesus Himself that are conjured up by our " popular " soft feeble hymns and tunes, Mr. Gray adds :—

> "God sent men a Saviour who was made of stern, virile elements. If we offer them a soft caricature of that heroic Figure they will go away. But where did they get the notion that religion is a sickly thing ? Where did they get that disastrous conception of Jesus ? "

And he finds the answer in our hymn-books.

Since strength and joy have fallen so far from our current presentation of the Christian religion, many people believe that they must go outside it to find them. Few things will do more to restore them in the place whereto they belong than the choice of the right hymns and the right tunes.

It is largely for reasons such as these that we would urge the disuse of certain tunes, not necessarily in themselves to be condemned from the purely musical point of view. Emotion—whether of sorrow, joy, or tenderness, must not, indeed, be ruled out ; but, in evoking it, jealous care must be taken that it should never be less than sincere, restrained, and dignified.

The ultimate test, then, of a hymn-tune is not its capacity to satisfy a congregation, nor even its effectiveness as music ; but rather the impression that it makes, and its faithfulness as an expression of the Christian religion. Moreover, the impression must be both positive and lasting.

Such a simple thing as a common chord played upon a great cathedral organ, or the top note of a sweet-voiced chorister, may be a thing of beauty and may thrill the hearer ; but the emotion produced is vague and meaningless, and the thing is spiritually inadequate. The effect of the satisfactory hymn is quite definite, and it leaves not an ephemeral but a lasting impression.

Even granted the firm application of this searching test, probably there will always remain a debatable-land containing tunes which it would be harsh to sweep away, but which an unbending musical judgment would hardly feel justified in retaining. Concessions must be made *pendente lite*, and no concession boundary can be fixed. Meanwhile the rigorist may come to count more upon the growth of taste and knowledge from the inside ; and indiscriminating choirs and congregations, instead

of being left to smoulder in resentment at having their favourite tunes dismissed as "bad" on the *fiat* of an external authority, will learn discrimination and turn critics themselves. Wherever principles of criticism are shown to rest on reasonable and justifiable foundations—except in the case of those whose lack of musical faculty precludes the formation of a sound opinion—the standard of judgment in hymn-tunes will certainly be raised.

There are tunes, however, about which no one should have any doubt at all. We set out again the characteristics by which to distinguish the better from the worse. A good hymn-tune is one of which the emotional content is appropriate to its plan and occasion; the harmonised parts (especially the bass) should be interesting and distinctive; the melody should be well drawn, not made up of notes which bear no close relation to one another, nor insisting with wearisome iteration on a recurrence of the same note; so that it sounds clear, decided and convincing when sung without harmonies. Its rhythm must fit closely to the words, but must be neither trivial nor obtrusive, nor dull. The general pattern may be very simple; but it must be definite.

To illustrate the above points it may be well to take a few concrete instances.

It is in the matter of rhythm that the hymn-tune writers of the nineteenth century most conspicuously failed; their prim and regular jog-trot compares ill with such a perfect specimen as the Genevan Psalm 42, set to "Joy and triumph everlasting" in the *English Hymnal*; or with the original form of many tunes of that style which Victorian taste transformed into rhythmical monotony.

In regard to melody compare the dullness of "Miserere," the usual tune for "Saviour, when in dust to Thee" (*Hymns, Ancient and Modern* (251)), with the melody of "Aberystwith," the beautiful Welsh tune with which it is beginning to be identified. Compare "St. Clement" (477) with its hurdy-gurdy rhythm, or "St. Bees" (260) in its tawdriness, to the beautiful simplicity of Gibbons' "Canterbury" (*English Hymnal*, 314; *Oxford Hymn Book*, 98). Or the maddening insistence of the wrong accent in every line of every verse, as well as the feeble melody and weak inner parts of Barnby's "For all the Saints" (437), to the two splendid tunes by Stanford and Vaughan Williams, which really reflect the triumphant ring of the words. Or take the want of movement in "St. Andrew of Crete" (91), and compare Croft's 148th (414) or Darwall's 148th (546).

In regard to the part-writing, look at the monotony of the

alto part of "St. Oswald" (274) which has D repeated 20 times out of 30 notes, as contrasted with the inner parts of the *Passion Chorale* (111); or contrast the cheap effect of "Magdalena" (186) or "St. Catharine" (198) with "St. Theodulph" (98) and Harwood's fine tune ("Thornbury") to "Thy hand, O God, has guided" (604[2]).

In these days of more general musical education each congregation includes a percentage of people with sufficient musical knowledge to be really hurt, or even alienated, by some of the music which they are condemned to hear in church; for it is fair to assume they know it to be unworthy of the purpose for which it is indended. And the easiest place in which to start an *index expurgatorius* is the hymn-book.

2. Turning now from the selection of hymns to the method of singing them, we wish to emphasise the variety which is possible and very desirable. Hymn singing without such variety or discrimination is liable to become mechanical, especially where hymns are long, metres are few, and tunes are mainly of one type.

Any good hymn-book provides variety by including tunes so markedly different that they have little in common but the name. Yet, appearing as they do cheek by jowl in the book, a choir is apt to treat them all as if they were alike. Differences of style need to be studied: not only is a plainsong tune entirely different in character from a measured tune, but the older type of psalm tune, of the Genevan Psalter and its English equivalents lies nearer in the versatility of its rhythm to plainchant than to the later church-tune of Ravenscroft's day. In execution the utmost rhythmical freedom is needed for the plainsong tune, a considerable freedom or *tempo rubato* is required in interpreting the semibreves and minims of a tune of Bourgeois; relatively strict time is necessary for the church tune, but even this should not have the strictness of a modern tune composed on the model of a part-song.

Again, the junctions of the lines require attention. The German chorale favours a pause at the end of most of the lines, and these should be taken for granted even when not printed in the hymn-book. Less disconnecting are the long gathering notes of the church tunes; these have been too much eliminated in recent years, and some return to them is desirable, especially in congregational singing. Some metres presuppose at least a little merciful liberty at the end of certain lines, *e.g.*, in C.M. after the first and third lines, and in L.M. after all of them, else the singing becomes either too light and too little sustained, or, if not that, then too breathless. In plainsong hymn tunes the lines

should be sung in pairs, making a substantial pause between the pairs (where the sense of the words will permit it), and pausing only to take breath between the lines forming each pair. Strict metronomic time from the first chord to the last is the exception rather than the rule; indeed, it is demanded only in the part-song type of tune.

Liberties such as these are a necessary part of hymn-singing, especially when it is congregational rather than choral. But liberty may degenerate into dragging unless care is taken to avoid it. This vice is best counteracted, however, not by rigidity of time-beats but by vitality of rhythm. The congregation that has grasped the rhythm of a good tune will not need to be pulled up to time or forced back into order by the accompanist.

The question of pace is similar but different. Different types of tune demand different relative standards of pace. A massive psalm tune can be sung, with good effect, just as slowly as it is possible to sing it consistently with carrying on without gap from each note to the next until the line is finished. But light tunes need to move fast, and some are so pert that they almost need to be gabbled in a vain attempt to conceal their deficiencies. Between the two extremes there is a very wide range of pace.

But pace is relative, not absolute. The pace at which any given hymn is sung must in some degree depend upon the numbers of singers and the amount of their skill, on the size of the building or its resonance, on the psychology of the congregation at the moment, and many other modifying considerations. It may, however, be more or less taken for granted that a congregation will sing hymns slower than a choir, and a congregation of men slower than a congregation of women; that a large church needs a more deliberate pace than a small one; that a countryman is less agile than a townsman.

Expression in congregational hymn-singing is inevitably restricted to broad and general effects; rapid changes are impossible. But a much wider range of tone can be attained than is usually attempted, especially if the congregation is taught really to sing softly, and not merely to stop singing or to whisper, when a *piano* or a *pianissimo* is needed. When such a wide range has been learnt, then there is splendid room for long and broad sweeps of *crescendo* and *diminuendo*. The last verse of "Rock of Ages" sung by a devout and trained congregation may be one of the most moving of musical experiences.

The accompaniment of hymns is an art in itself, especially when the singing is in unison. Varied harmonies have their

use and may be appropriate to one verse, or perhaps two, in a hymn : the real art of the accompanist, however, lies not in them but in his rendering of the normal setting with varieties of tone and colour, of heaviness and lightness, of registration, of phrasing, and the like.

When a group of chanters, or a choir, is available, new possibilities of variety and expression are brought into being. Then it may easily be the case that monotony is no longer the danger, but, on the contrary, too restless or inappropriate change. With this word of caution we may again summarise the chief available variants :—

(1) Descant.—This, for convenience, may be taken to mean that while choir and congregation sing the melody in unison, a few treble voices sing a specially added part.

(2) *Faux-Bourdon* or *Faburden*.—This, for convenience, may be taken to imply that the congregation sings the melody as *canto fermo*, while chanters or choir accompany it in three-part or four-part harmony.

(3) Special settings of particular verses, *e.g.*, Bach's of certain verses of a chorale.

(4) Verses allotted to particular voices.

(5) Verses allotted to choir without congregation, or *vice versa*.

(6) Unaccompanied passages alternating with others that are accompanied.

(7) Full unison with varied accompaniment.

(8) Anthemwise settings of a hymn with variation verse by verse.

Some of these plans of hymn-singings may be found too elaborate for the ordinary church services : but, if so, they might find their place in a special service, or as a feature in the programme of an organ recital.

(7) The Musical Training of Clergy in Theological Colleges.

The Church of our day seems hardly to have realised what is involved in the great development of musical services which

has been going on steadily for the last 100 years. A century ago musical services were few, apart from cathedral and collegiate churches. A few psalm-tunes and a few Anglican chants were in traditional use; and a few more hymns were beginning to find their way into popular services. There was no need of any musical training for the clergy such as had been universal in the pre-Reformation days. Music was entirely an extra.

The Theological Colleges began to arise in order to supply a more effective training for clergy; and they have in some respects wrought a revolution. But they have hardly yet taken music seriously, nor moved with the needs in that respect. Music is still regarded as an extra; valuable, indeed, and popular, but unessential.

We feel constrained to urge that it is essential. The clergy in every parish in the country now have to take a leading part in services that in some degree are musical in many places—numerically indeed in most—they must direct them, unless some more competent musician can be found or paid for. Often it is on the parson, or perhaps on his wife, that the duty falls of supervising at least, if not of actually directing, the music.

The question therefore arises as to the proportion of educated men who are incapable of music. It has been said that tone-deafness is as rare as colour-blindness; and, if this is so, it is clear that we are wrong if either in Church or State we treat music as an educational luxury for the few.

Up to the present neither primary or secondary schools have done their part, and reform must begin, not with the Theological Colleges but at a much earlier stage. By the time when men go to them the harm has already been stereotyped, for a large number of men not only are untrained but have been accustomed for years to be classed as untrainable.

The very friendly and interesting replies that we have received from the heads of these Colleges in answer to our enquiries show that they are awake to the need. They are already doing something, and in most cases are ready, if possible, to do more. We therefore leave the consideration of the reforms needed in earlier stages of training, and address ourselves to this more immediate problem of helping the Theological Colleges to make the most of the untrained but not untrainable, voices and capacities of their incoming students. The time available will necessarily be short (even in a course of two years, towards which as a minimum we are steadily, if slowly, moving): but three graded sets of suggestions may be made.

1. In present circumstances all students who are called un-

musical will need to have some elementary musical initiation. Without this as a basis all further training facilities will leave unhelped the men who most need help. They must be taught the modes and scales; the intervals; the notations of tonic sol-fa and plainsong, as well as the staff notation. Further, they must all learn how to breathe and how to manage their throats.

2. The larger number will then be found capable of learning to sing a simple bass, or even a tenor, part correctly. In order to help this it would be well in college chapels that the hymns should be set in simple parts for men's voices, such as were much used in the Army during the war.

3. When this grounding has been secured, more plans will become possible and profitable: (*a*) lectures will be given by visiting lecturers on musical history, musical taste, and on music in relation to worship; (*b*) some instruction in elementary choir training will be available for the more musical men; (*c*) a choral society will provide the practice for part-singing; and other such facilities as may be desired should be planned.

Much of the above training can be done by work in class: but most men will require individual instruction as well: and some will need a good deal of it. So it is desirable to secure that one of the staff should be trained to do this work, unless there is available on the spot a satisfactory equivalent. Many Colleges have hitherto found great difficulty in getting a competent teacher.

We take it for granted that in the ordinary instruction on Liturgy and the Conduct of Services, given during the college course, the musical side of the matter ought, in most cases, to be more adequately handled.

We suggest that some alliance and more co-operation is needed between Theological Colleges and Cathedrals, Colleges of Music, or other centres where future church musicians and choirmasters are being trained. The benefits might in many ways be mutual. So, without elaborating any proposals for such alliances, we suggest that various new experiments in co-operation might well be devised and made.

It would not, in our opinion, be advisable to suggest that music should form even an optional subject in the examinations preliminary to ordination, though there would be much precedent for such a requirement. On the other hand it is evident that, in the great pressure under which Theological Colleges at present work, and with the vast amount of teaching which at present has to be compressed into a short course, there

is a real danger that, even where intentions are of the best, the musical training may be crowded out. A suitable counter-pressure might well be provided, therefore, in the form of an inspection of Colleges (which desired it), taking into consideration the whole musical life of each College. This inspection might form a useful point of contact with Colleges of Music: and would in practice be easily combinable with some lectures from external lecturers. It would also tend to keep the Colleges in step along a line of progress, and to raise the general level of musical education among the clergy.

It is not supposed that such plans as these would make all, or even the bulk of, the clergy competent musicians: but it would be a gain if they raised a little the average level of competence; making the competent men more competent, and the rest more aware both of their capacities and of their limitations.

(8) The Training of Choirmasters and Organists.

On the whole, the best training available for a parish church organist is that to be obtained from a few years' work as pupil-assistant at a church where there is a good choir. It needs, however, to be supplemented by a thorough grounding in musical and liturgical history, and broadened by a wider outlook and experience than one locality will supply. But, even this training is not always available, especially in thinly populated parts of the country where skilled professional musicians are few. To the lack of some such all-round experience and apprenticeship must be ascribed much of the prevailing inadequacy in the choir training and in the general knowledge of a church musician's work, apart from mere technical excellence in organ playing.

A few years ago the Royal College of Organists instituted an admirable choir-training examination. It consisted of two sections:—

(*a*) A *viva voce* examination on voice training, the teaching of musical rudiments and sight singing, the singing of responses and hymns, chanting (plainsong and Anglican), and monotoning; choir management (arrangement and balance of voices, methods at rehearsal, &c.);

(*b*) A testing with choir, the candidate being required to conduct and direct a small choir in voice production, chanting, and singing of hymns and certain specified services and anthems.

This examination had to be dropped during the war, owing to the cost and other difficulties. The Committee is glad to hear that the Council of the Royal College of Organists is arranging for its revival at an early date. All who have to do with the appointment of a music director for any church will be well advised to be very particular in examining his qualifications in this respect, as well as in organ playing. By these two means working together a great step in the way of improvement may be taken.

We have suggested the following as an outline of the examination that seem to be required :—

On Paper.—Harmonising a melody in simple ecclesiastical style ; harmonising a hymn-tune freely, as for an accompaniment to unison singing ; answering questions on choir training ; on the place of music in the church service ; on the style and history of ecclesiastical music ; on the structure and nature of the church services as distinct from non-liturgical services ; showing an acquaintance with the repertory for the Church's seasons ; writing a short essay on a subject drawn from a given book on church music.

At the Organ.—Harmonising a plainsong hymn melody, a melody in psalm-tune style, and one in chorale style ; improvising a short movement on a given theme, or interludes as for use between verses of a processional, or a brief *coda* to a hymn-tune ; accompanying a monotone and its inflexions.

Viva Voce.—A practical test in choir training and management, and in the elementary technique of choral conducting.

It will be observed that this scheme includes more than the strictly musical requirements, and it does so deliberately. An intimate knowledge of ecclesiastical music is inseparable from the knowledge of the Liturgy itself and of the principles and history of church services. Some proof of sufficient knowledge in this regard should be required from those who are to be certificated as directors of church music. Both choirs and congregations live at the mercy of ill-advised musical fashions. At one time there is a rage for vapid vesper hymns or for florid and pretentious "amens." At another time "recessionals" are the vogue, or choral vestry prayers. In some places it seems impossible to sing the Eucharist without adding as an extra at the

end an evening canticle, the *Nunc dimittis*. Now the music director must know enough about the principles of worship, and about the structure and *rationale* of the Prayer Book services, to be able not only to withstand bad fashions, but also to explain to all concerned *why* they are bad. Therefore a solid training in such matters is necessary for him, whether he is to combat what is unsuitable, or to have the happier task of leading good reforms and advances.

By themselves examination schemes can do comparatively little good unless those responsible for the engagement of organists in their turn lay stress on choir training and church musicianship. It is of course impossible to test fully an applicant's abilities as a choir trainer ; they are so largely compounded of tact, organising power, and common-sense ; and so they require time for their manifestation. But, we venture to repeat, a candidate should be expected to produce adequate testimony as to his qualifications in this and in the rest of the equipment of a church musician, besides organ playing. At present far too much importance is attached to proficiency in playing organ solos. The Committee is far from depreciating this accomplishment. Well used, it has its place in the Church's offering of music ; and, when good taste is brought to bear on the choice of material, it plays its part in accentuating the note of the service and season almost as definitely and helpfully as the music sung by the choir and congregation. But it is not an essential part of the service. If it is bad the congregation may avoid it by the simple expedient of arriving punctually and departing promptly. On the other hand the results of bad choir training, dull accompaniment, want of sympathy with the service, and poor taste in regard to the details of the music, cannot be escaped. The popular designation " organist and choirmaster " emphasising, as it does, the less important side of the work, should be dropped in favour of " choirmaster and organist," or, better still, " music director," though in many cases it will be understood that the duties of a " music director " include playing the organ.

(9) The Relations of Choirmaster and Organist to the Ecclesiastical Authorities.

Enquiry shows that these relations are delicate and need careful consideration. In the past all has not gone well, but the prospect improves as the importance of the music director's position is more fully understood.

The relations are different in the case of a cathedral or collegiate church and in that of a parish church.

The status of a cathedral choirmaster and organist is not at present on a satisfactory footing. The control of the music in cathedrals has passed through some interesting stages of development. In early days, when musical knowledge was practically limited to the clergy, the canons were competent to deal with all the musical details of the service, and one of them was appointed precentor, taking rank usually in the establishment next after the dean. In the sixteenth century the control of the music passed from one of the canons to a minor canon as precentor in the new-foundation cathedral, and, in some degree, to a priest-vicar as succentor in the old, for the reason that by that time musical knowledge was to be found in those ranks rather than in the capitular bodies.

The time now seems ripe for a further step to be taken, and for the control to pass from the precentor or succentor into the hands of the music director. For whereas under the former conditions his qualifications and training were no more than were required for the "*pulsator organorum*," now candidates for this office are for the most part public-school and university men, of equal culture with the clergy and men of the learned professions, and their skill in music singles them out as specialists in their own line. This development in the musical profession is a very marked feature of the last twenty-five years. If it could be made possible for the music-director to occupy a position in the chapter as a canon, not necessarily in holy orders, many great advantages would be secured, while the precentors and succentors might still retain their office with the non-musical duties attached to them. Such a change could not, however, be effected except by legislation modifying existing statutes and laws, and we suggest that the matter should be considered by the National Church Assembly.

As matters stand at present there is no security for a cathedral organist from interference in doing the work that he has been appointed to do. Under present conditions, for example, one of his first duties may be to set to work to improve the existing standard, and particularly in regard to the choice of music to be performed in the services. Now it is intolerable that he, who has the expert knowledge, should be compelled, morally at least, if not legally, to accede to irresponsible requests to perform music of an inferior value; yet this is frequently the experience of a cathedral organist who is devoting the best of his gifts to a high and honourable purpose. In this and other such matters of a musical character the responsibility is his, and in its own

sphere that responsibility should be recognised. Indeed, it is not unlike the responsibility of a canon for what he preaches, and should be viewed accordingly.

If, as we have suggested, he were *ex officio* a member of the chapter, this point would be clearer, and the gain would be great to the chapter itself as well as to the organist. He would then be able to explain his policy with regard to all musical matters to the chapter for its approval, his technical knowledge would be more fully available for its guidance, and he would not be overruled, except as a colleague, after he had fully stated his case.*

We have suggested elsewhere (Section (12)) the setting up of a Central Church Music Council, and if any questions concerning the music arose which were too difficult to settle in the chapter-meeting, the advice of such a council would be available, and it might prove very valuable.

As regards parish churches, the legal position of the organists is described in *The Book of Church Law*, by Blunt and Phillimore, very briefly : they have "no independent status, and no ecclesiastical position as such." Lord Stowell decided that "the minister has the right of directing the service, *e.g.*, when the organ shall and shall not play, and when the children shall and shall not chant, though the organist is paid and the children managed by the churchwardens." To which may be added, from Cripps' *Law relating to Church and Clergy* (p. 560, ed. 1921), that "as the minister is to direct at his discretion what parts of the service are to be sung, and to exercise a general superintendence in such matters, it follows that he may direct by whom the singing or chanting are to be principally performed, whether it be instrumental or vocal, and, in fact, make any new orders or regulations relating thereto as he may think fit, but subject to the general controlling power of the ordinary, who is the proper person to consider complaints. The appointment or dismissal of singers or instrumental performers in the church rests entirely with the minister, who might dismiss them individually or as a body, appoint a different method, or prohibit singing altogether, if he thought proper, subject, however, as we have already observed."

The situation remains the same legally under the new parochial church councils; but it is not satisfactory. The music-director's position should be made secure against arbitrary

* A "Mixed Chapter" already exists at Southwark, in which finance has its lay representation, but not music. It would, perhaps, be more satisfactory if both were represented.

dismissal or capricious action, and an appeal should lie to the bishop.

The Report of the Archbishops' Committee of Inquiry on *The Worship of the Church* (p. 30) recommended the formation of a church music committee containing amongst its members the clergy, churchwardens, organist, and choirmaster of the parish. Now the parochial church council might very properly appoint such a committee. And whatever the difficulties in the way (and many possible difficulties would not appear in practice) this would provide a needed opportunity for the information and musical education of some of the more responsible members of the congregation, and thus sound knowledge would be spread. For this and other reasons it seems to be at least an experiment worthy of trial.

But the task of such a committee, though very necessary, will be a very difficult one. English people as a whole do not treat music seriously; they look upon it as something unimportant. In all that is said about church music it must be remembered that the public needs to have its mind enlightened about music itself, rather than about the church side of it. One of the reasons why congregations tolerate, or even approve, bad music, is that they do not think that music, as such, has any definite meaning or any real importance; therefore any noise will do in church, so long as it is made upon a respectable and religious instrument like an organ, or sung out of a hymn-book. People who talk of church music for the most part do not think really at all of the *music* as a thing possessing its own rights and having its own methods. This point must first be made clear to them; and only then they may come to see how much of our church music needs reform and drastic handling. This is the sort of gospel which the music committee will have to preach while carrying on a practical campaign of reform or of development. In this way it may greatly assist the work of the music-director.

His relations with the incumbent are still more crucial. There is no royal road to harmony except the prevalence of the right spirit; but some of the occasions of discord may be lessened, *e.g.*:—

(*a*) By the opportunities for friendly discussion afforded in the music committee;

(*b*) By greater security in the music-director's position;

(*c*) By the rise in the standard of general education and musical competence of music-directors, and by the better facilities for ascertaining that they are really qualified before their appointment;

(*d*) By an improved level of knowledge of music, historical and other, in the clergy ;

(*e*) By the provision of an adequate stipend, such as will enable the musical director to give his time and care more fully than is now possible, in many instances, to the perfecting of the music of the services.

It is unfortunately true that many country and urban parishes do not give more than from £10 to £50 a year to the organist and choirmaster. No such sum should be offered to a professional musician ; especially now that the standard of payment has risen, and in view of the competition of the picture palaces. On the other hand, it is true that with the organist, as with the clergy, the pecuniary aspect is not the primary one. Much valuable service is given that is either a labour of love, or else quite out of proportion to the small sum, practically an honorarium, received, which is all that the people can afford.

It is, after all, mutual respect that is needed for the pleasant and useful co-operation of the incumbent and the choirmaster. Often when differences have arisen, each was standing out for a principle that is worthy. Jealousy for his art, or effort for the best on the one side ; and, on the other, the maintenance of an ideal of worship that is in "spirit and in truth," and the need of making music and all things minister to that ideal.

The choirmaster should always be a member of the parochial council. This, as well as the music committee, would provide a means for that expression of feeling which relieves a tension, that otherwise might be the more mischievous the more carefully it was repressed. The Council may become a means too for the encouragement of all that is best, and for securing approval and support for wisely matured plans of reform or advance.

From time to time there may be heard in church the ugly clash of the voluntary with the bells in the tower, or of the singing with a gong in the sanctuary ; such things are symbolical, as well as actual, and they represent the close and sometimes difficult contact in which the musician works with his colleagues. But if experience has shown that these relations are delicate, it also bears witness that they are capable of happy and workable adjustment, in as far as they are taken up into the master-thought of doing all to the glory of God.

(10) The Use and Abuse of the Organ.

To say that he who would obtain the best from his instrument must thoroughly understand its capacities is to state a platitude. Yet this is just what many organists fail to achieve; neither do they make the best of the strong points of the organ, nor—and this is all important—do they avoid, or, at any rate, conceal as far as possible, its weaknesses.

The organ has a greater depth, power, range and variety of tone than any other instrument. It is the only one upon which a simultaneous use can be made of different tone colours for different melodies or counterpoints. It will sustain sounds indefinitely.

Its weakness as an instrument of expression lies in the fact that it has only three means of producing rhythm and phrasing. Of these three, one is easy of accomplishment to any organist whose mind and spirit are in close touch with hand and fingers. The other two are found to be more or less clumsy expedients, even as employed by the best players. The first means lies in the organ's capacity to produce a complete range of expression varying from the shortest *staccato* to the smoothest *legato*. The second means is the use of the swell pedal; and the third is the *sforzando* obtained by suddenly adding to and reducing the stops by pistons or composition pedals.

The good player uses depth of tone where it is required—to express, for instance, such things as the eternal, unchangeable omnipotence of God. The bad player gives a feeling of heaviness to the whole of his music by a dull, continuous and monotonous use of the pedals and of the deeper toned manual stops. The good player reserves the fuller power of his organ for great climaxes. The bad player abuses it to drag an inadequately rehearsed choir through their work.

The same distinction may be drawn with regard to range of tone and variety of colour. The artist has the right purpose behind his use of them. He is not afraid to employ the softest *pianissimo*—he will need it if he is an accompanist. Nor does he fear to blaze out with the utmost *fortissimo*, provided that the music and the words sung demand it, and provided also that the choral body which he is accompanying will bear it. He has a quick instinct for the right colour, and he investigates the full resources of his organ in this matter by using as many stops as he can singly, and as many combinations of them as are effective. The bad player is most often monotonous. Instead of discovering the utmost possibilities of his instrument, he is

content with the combinations ready made by pistons and pedals; he never thinks of playing upon a single diapason or a swell reed. Sometimes he is enterprising enough to do this, but even so he cannot connect tone-colour with expression. Or again, he does not subtly suggest atmosphere, but strives crudely to imitate the sounds of nature which he desires to illustrate.

All through this Report stress is laid on the importance of rhythm. Rhythm is the life—the heart-beat—of music; rhythmless music is dead. If the infinite varieties of rhythm and phrasing obtainable from stringed instruments by the bow, and from the voice and from wind instruments by the human breath, be compared with the three methods mentioned above of obtaining these things from an organ, it will at once be understood how weak the organ is on the rhythmic side. In the hands of a bad player it is responsible for much lifeless, pointless, indefinite sound; even when played by a master, it is incapable of extracting all the life and meaning from every phrase.

The average church organist gives far too little attention to rhythm and phrasing. His *legato* and *staccato* are not always governed by the spirit and intention of the music, but by the exigencies of the technique. Sounds which it is difficult to join are played *staccato;* sounds which it is easy to join are joined, even when the character of the music demands a different treatment. He has not learned that art is a reflection of life; that disorderly time, rhythm and phrasing are just as irksome as a snowstorm in June, a recklessly driven motor-car, or meals at irregular hours.

The organist, of all musicians, should be rhythmic; for not only has he to deal with a very unrhythmic instrument, but he has to supply the rhythm, and therefore the life, for many people in his choir and congregation who are woefully deficient in it. At all events he must be an example. He must not lumber along after the free rhythm of the chanting, nor tie all possible notes in the hymn-tunes into a lifeless *legato*. He of all people must not be guilty of such disorderly practices as playing one hand after the other, and feet behind both, or of putting down one note of the first chord before the others, ignorantly imagining that this is an assistance to the singers. He must not break the flow, and kill the momentum of the music in order to pull out stops or push down composition pedals. His one thought must be to inspire—to breathe life into—the music of those who are only too ready to fall into a deadly musical sleep. It is through rhythm and phrasing that he will do this far more even than through gradations of light and shade, or through colour changes. And he will find that life will come into his playing

more readily through the first of the three methods enumerated (that is through his fingers and hands) than by means of the other two, *i.e.*, the swell pedal, or the *sforzando* operated by stop-control. The swell pedal is more often abused than rightly used, aimless pumping at it being one of the commonest faults. The *sforzando* obtained by the third method can only be occasionally used with good effect.

If every note played is with the one purpose of inspiring by subtle suggestion of the atmosphere and inner meaning of the music or the words, or both, the organist will not fill up gaps in the service, especially the Holy Communion service, by aimless rhythmless wanderings, dignified by the title of "improvisations" or "extemporisations." Periods of silence are very helpful to worship. Very few organists, if any, are great enough musicians to provide impromptu any music fitting enough to warrant the sacrifice of every one of these moments of stillness. The organist must never lower his art to the level of a restaurant orchestra by playing inanities merely in order to cover up the noise of people walking about.

It is not intended by this to condemn the use of organ music before the service begins, when there is a competent soloist to play it. If the organ helps to interpret and enforce the words of the service it has also its own contribution to make when used in preparing the congregation to take part in worship. Coming out of a troubled or worldly atmosphere, they need such help to solemnise and quicken their higher thoughts and feelings. Music has, for most people, a mysterious power of making them sensitive to spiritual influences, and a wise use of the opening voluntary may result in the people starting on a spiritual level, which otherwise they would reach only later in the service. In order to secure this result it will not do to rely upon improvisation. The best music should be chosen and prepared in advance, and performed as an important and relevant overture to the service, notice being given at the church door, or in other ways, of what is to be played.

Man's experience with all forms of self-expression is the same. In the earlier stages of our use of them the mind is wholly concentrated on the various means to the end. Eventually, one after the other, these means are relegated to the sub-conscious brain, and the mind is left free to concentrate upon the end itself. As children it was the method of holding the pen, the form of the letters, and the spelling of the words, that occupied us; we have now reached the stage when all these matters have become automatic, and we are free to concentrate on the expression of our thoughts. Let the organist practise even the simplest things

until he has acquired this freedom; and let him never attempt in public anything so difficult to him, that his brain is riveted upon the means, whilst the end in view is forgotten.

Finally, let him remember that if he cannot do more to make, he can certainly do more to mar, the service than anyone; for he controls the most powerful of all instruments, and very often plays it continuously from before the service begins until after it is over, except during prayers, lessons, and sermon. The best choir may have its singing ruined by his bad playing. The congregation will take their cue from him; he can inspire, almost compel, them to sing if he will. On the other hand, he can easily take from them all desire to use, and all opportunity of using, what is their undoubted right, and what should be to many of them among their most valued privileges.

(11) Suggestions for Diocesan Organisation.

In the closing sections of this Report the Committee wishes to make some practical suggestions, less directly concerned with the detail of services than those already mentioned, but important in their bearing upon the subject in hand. Some of these are local or diocesan in scope, others concern central actions of the Church. We deal first with the former :—

1. Within the area of the parish itself we suggest that more might be effected in the formation of choral societies with which choirs would keep in close contact. Much rehearsing and training can better be done over secular music than sacred, and certain sides of musical efficiency can better be obtained in this way. Also musical co-operation between those who are divided up into separate choirs can be developed by a choral society; and this is really valuable. The choirs will be the better for singing the secular music, and if the choral society will from time to time study an oratorio or sacred cantata, and perform it in the atmosphere of a place of worship, both religion and art will be gainers.

2. Where the resources of a village, or of two neighbouring villages, do not allow of the formation of a choral society, occasional hymn-festivals may be most useful. About a dozen hymns should be carefully selected and learnt, and a paper given to each singer showing the arrangement of the singing, *i.e.*, some verses (especially the first and last) to be sung in unison; some set for men, some for trebles only, some sung in harmony by a picked choir, some with descants. Such hymn-festivals have been held in many parts of England during

the past few years, usually prefaced by a short address on the advantages of musical variety, and the beauty of free rhythm and unison singing. And a new vision of the possibilities and delight of hymn singing has been given to many small choirs and congregations.

3. Since the music competition movement has raised the standard of choral singing all over England, comparison is often made between the technical efficiency of a village choral society in such details as tone, attack, enunciation, &c., and the church choir in the same parish; and the conclusion is obvious that there is a distinct loss to the latter from its lack of individual criticism. With the idea of remedying this, the committees of several music competition festivals include in their syllabus various tests for church and chapel choirs—sometimes a chant, sometimes a hymn or anthem. Many people, however, object to the principle of competition for church choirs, so it seems worth while to quote the example of the Worcestershire organisation, which gives non-competitive tests for church music, including plainsong. An expert church musician listens to each choir, and gives sympathetic and helpful criticism, whilst all the choirs listen to each other's singing—a very important point. The right kind of rivalry is encouraged, and the outlook of the singers is widened.

4. If any steady and widespread progress is to be effected, a great deal will depend upon local efforts such as these. There has, during the last twenty years, been a considerable output of literature dealing not only with the principles of church music, but also with the details of its performance. There has also been a considerable increase in the number of actual compositions which aim at applying recovered principles in a modern way, and one that is consistent with the ideals of the Prayer Book. All this is of little avail, however, without the living voice of the teacher. We have reached a stage where the great need is not so much to know what to do as how to do it. In order to disseminate this practical knowledge a sustained and widespread effort is required. New ideas may be taken up in one or two important centres without very greatly affecting the Church as a whole. In order that they may permeate everywhere there must be an organised method of propaganda. This seems to depend upon finding the competent musicians who will not only train the choirs, but will train further the existing trainers, will guide and uplift musical taste, and raise the standard throughout the country.

Our hope is that in various quarters an experiment may be

made in this direction by the appointment of a diocesan inspector of choirs in any diocese (or archdeaconry) where the importance of church music is recognised and where such an experiment can be planned and financed. His task would be like that of a diocesan inspector of schools *mutatis mutandis*. He would inspect choirs which asked for inspection, and then report upon them. The process would give the opportunity to a wise and competent man to help and encourage in many ways, and would probably be worth a great deal more than lectures or mere instruction. For a choir that had asked for inspection would meet the inspector half-way, and would be intent on doing its own best rather than criticising the visitor. When suitable records have been made on the gramophone, he may find them very useful.

The choirs which received a good report, due regard being had to their circumstances, should receive a certificate, and be encouraged to go on to aim at a higher certificate. If some small grants were available for poorer places, they would enable a choir to add to its stock of music, and perhaps to amend as well as to enlarge its repertory.

In some dioceses it might be a good plan to invite a choir that did well to be responsible for one of the services in the cathedral on a day when the cathedral choir was away or on holiday. Such a compliment would be valued; and a very effective stimulus to zeal and good musicianship lies here ready to hand, in some places at any rate.

We believe that any such an experiment in inspection would soon justify itself, and find many imitators, and that nothing could compare with it in efficiency. There is no line along which we look more hopefully for real and detailed improvement in the rank and file of church choirs.

5. Some dioceses might be willing to organise a Diocesan Summer School of Church Music, which would try and carry out centrally the task which the system of inspection is carrying out diffusively.

The same work might be even better done in smaller areas around several local centres, where perhaps choirmasters, organists and clergy could gather more easily than at one central point. In either case those who are responsible for the music in the different parishes would gain greatly by the opportunity of hearing good lectures illustrated by a small picked body of voices, and by the discussion which would naturally follow such lectures. A school should last, if possible, three or four days, and take up various sides of the musical training.

But musical conferences lasting only a single whole day have already been found valuable and feasible. A good deal can be learnt even in so short a time, and the fellowship of such a gathering is very much appreciated by many who have otherwise few chances of meeting kindred spirits.

6. Such efforts will naturally be in the main diocesan ; and in all such organisations the cathedral, which is the established song-school of the diocese, will equally naturally play an important part.* But if all the enthusiasm and knowledge of the diocese can be gathered into a focus by the formation of a Diocesan Music Committee, the work of the cathedral itself will be very much helped, and the interest in the subject spread over a wider area. Moreover, an opportunity would thus be given for the representation of the different needs and possibilities of a variety of parishes which would prevent the too stringent stereotyping of any one style or ideal.

We would suggest, then, that with the sanction of the bishop, there be set up in every diocese a committee analogous to those which in so many dioceses have been formed "to deal with and to report upon questions or archæological, historical or ecclesiastical interest in connexion with church buildings." On such a committee room should be found for those who are versed in liturgical matters, as well as for musicians who have practical acquaintance with each of the types of choir and service to be found in the diocese.

The value of such a committee has already been shown in the diocese of Winchester, where the Bishop's Committee has a fine record of three years' work and progress behind it ; and we are confident therefore in recommending that this example should be followed elsewhere.

Such a committee's work should be both advisory and executive. Its advice would be valuable not only to individual choirs and choirmasters, but in other matters such as we have advocated with regard to hymn-festivals, choral societies, and to music competitions where church music occupies a place in the programme. On the executive side it would be responsible for other suggested plans the choir inspection, the schools and conferences for church music—as well as for diocesan choral festivals, and the like. It would issue from time to time lists of recommended music, or call attention to good books on the subject. Its tasks would probably grow ; indeed, without such a

* The Committee has heard with interest of the Dean of Windsor's scheme for developing the use of the Song-School at St. George's, and hope that its possibilities may be explored further.

mainspring, much of the advance and amendment which is here contemplated would be impossible; for, at best, only a few parts of the diocese would be likely to be reached. Only a diocesan organisation could hope to touch the whole of the diocese, or to win for musical reform the recognition that is needed from such bodies as the Diocesan Conference or the Finance Board. Our belief is that elsewhere, as at Winchester, a small body of enthusiasts, coming together under the bishop's sanction, and taking up the work practically and quietly, with the villages and smaller places chiefly in view, will come before long to win its way and to justify its diocesan status.*

(12) Suggestions for Central Organisation.

The Committee recommends the appointment of a Central Council on Church Music, and mainly on the ground that some body is needed to which reference may be made with a view to obtaining the most authoritative form of advice and opinion. It is not suggested that local initiative should necessarily be expected of such a body, for such initiative is far better left to the parish, the rural deanery, or the diocese. But for church purposes the need of such a committee is urgent.

Already in Section (9) we have suggested that the council might be useful with regard to questions raised in the case of difficulty within cathedral chapters. The same is true in cases of difficulty arising within parochial councils, or between incumbent and choirmaster. But apart from any such difficulties, the council's advice would be very valuable as regards the appointment of organists or music-directors, especially in cathedrals and larger churches.

There is a further duty which this central committee might, in certain circumstances, be called upon to perform. We are glad to hear that the Royal College of Organists is considering the possibilities of an examination which shall be a test in church musicianship as well as in organ solo playing. We have already, in Section (8), suggested what ground we think such an examination should cover, and provision that should be made for the corresponding instruction, as well as for examination. If this is done, the Central Church Music Committee would perform a useful function by keeping in touch with the musical authorities of the College so that by friendly co-operation the needs of the

* See some extracts from the Memorandum that the Winchester Committee has submitted, which are printed in Appendix II.

Church may be met. If, however, it is found impossible for the College to undertake the granting of such a diploma, we suggest that this Central Committee be empowered to take the matter in hand. At present, for lack of something of the sort, not only is the existing training unsatisfactory, but those who have to appoint music-directors and choirmasters are in the dark, or are even misled, as to the qualifications of the applicants.

A further duty of the Central Committee would be, in conjunction with the Central Advisory Council of Training for the Ministry to make arrangements for the proper instruction of ordinands in the essentials of liturgical chant, and for the inspection of the Theological Colleges in this particular subject.

We venture to suggest that the Central Committee should be appointed by the bishops, for they are the officers of the Church ultimately responsible for the public worship; and only by some such method of appointment is it easily possible to get a committee sufficiently strong on all sides of the work to carry out what is needed, and to command the necessary support and recognition.

We cannot conclude our Report, which has necessarily been critical, and in some parts severe, without expressing the general hopefulness which has prevailed at our meetings, and has increased rather than diminished as our inquiry has proceeded. It rests upon a certain growing dissatisfaction with the weaker part of our musical tradition and with the cruder part of our present attainment, which is in evidence wherever church music is discussed. Among those most immediately concerned the standard is rising, and with the rise comes an enthusiasm for amendment which is infectious and exhilarating.

Since the war, too, men's minds are in general less hidebound, and more open to accept new standards. Proposals in many fields, which would not have been listened to ten years ago, are now followed eagerly. Thus a new spirit with regard to church music is springing up in the rank and file, and men are questioning the meaning and value of things which they never questioned before. This, then, is the moment for all men and women of good will to make a determined effort together, and for the glory of God to give up what is unworthy of His services, even if it cost some pain, and to reach out to what is before.

Then not only will our services be more beautiful and reverent, but our children— and this is no small point—will grow up with a higher conception of the beauty and excellence of God as reflected in all the hymns of praise that are offered to His glorious Majesty.

APPENDIX I.

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APPENDIX II.

FROM THE MEMORANDUM OF THE WINCHESTER DIOCESAN CHURCH MUSIC COMMITTEE.

After two years' work the Winchester Diocesan Church Music Committee has reached agreement on the following points :—

1. The secret of Church Music Reform is the teaching of the teachers : clergy, organists, and choirmasters.

2. The study of plainsong should be part of the general training of all church musicians, whether it is likely to be used in the churches where they serve or not.

3. The quality of the music used in church should not be lowered for the sake of real or fancied spiritual ends.

4. There should be a larger element of standardised music in universal use.

5. Choir and people have each a distinct musical function in worship. Both should be trained to work (*a*) independently, (*b*) in co-operation, (*c*) antiphonally.

6. The performances of mixed village choirs in secular competition festivals show the standard to be aimed at by village church choirs, and are an argument in favour of mixed choirs in village churches.

7. The principle of verbal rhythm as applied to the Psalms, even when sung to Anglican chants, is sound, *and should be applied within limits to hymn singing*, as well as psalm singing.

8. The quality of the music given in the religious period in day school, in Sunday school, and in Catechism, and the way it is taught, have a considerable, if indirect, influence on the taste and standard in music of Church people generally ; it is therefore important to foster mutual confidence between a diocesan church music committee and diocesan inspectors and Sunday school authorities.

9. It is important that a diocesan church music committee should avoid the charge of endeavouring to promote or support the views of one school of thought in the church at the expense of others, or one style of music (*e.g.*, plainchant or the music of any one period or country) at the expense of others. It must be concerned not with one kind only, but with the best of all kinds.

APPENDIX III.

AN EXAMPLE OF A SCHOOL FOR ORGANISTS AND CHOIRMASTERS.

The school lasted for three full days. The result showed that from 16 to 20 people is the best number for such a school. Those present had only very slight technical qualification. Choirwork of a simple character was done, *e.g.*, "How to take a choir practice." The importance of speech-rhythm was first discussed, and then the principles laid down were applied to singing and (a very important point) to accompaniment.

A noteworthy feature was the combination of a local choir, a local choral society, and visitors in a combined service. The elements of choral conducting were also dealt with.

The school was accommodated at the diocesan Retreat House, and was easily managed on the financial side. The catering was cheap, and parochial church councils in most cases willingly paid the expenses of organists and choirmasters attending the school.

A valuable side result has been several conferences of clergy and organists. Small centres combined with intensive working certainly produce the best results. Evidence has since come to hand that the ideas set forth at the school have in many cases been carried out. Owing to the advantage of having the support of diocesan authority, other choirmasters are able to carry out reforms that otherwise would be turned down by local critics.

This school for people with small attainments has yielded better results than a former effort in which there was a mixed gathering, because it was possible to arrange a simpler syllabus. It is clear that a system of visiting choir trainers is the important object at which to aim.

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